



State of Idaho

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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BRAD LITTLE
Governor

GARY SPACKMAN
Director

July 26, 2021

LUCAS YOCKEY
WATERMASTER, WATER DISTRICT NO. 34
211 E CUSTER RD STE B
MACKAY, ID 83251

VIA EMAIL TO: watermaster34@atcnet.net; blridgm@atcnet.net

RE: Request to Determine Futile Call – Big Lost River

Dear Mr. Yockey,

On July 26, 2021, the Idaho Department of Water Resources (Department) received your request for a futile call determination on the Big Lost River. Based on the information you have provided, the apparent support by the advisory committee members, and the Department's analysis of the current water supply conditions (email summary by D. Hoekema attached), the Department concludes your request to determine a futile call on the Big Lost River is justified. This letter is to notify you that the futile call determination request is hereby approved considering the information noted below.

Background

- On Thursday July 22, 2021, you contacted the Department to express concern that a futile call determination request was imminent due to the rapidly diminishing water supply in the Big Lost River and the nearly exhausted storage volume (appx. 3%) left in Mackay Reservoir.
- On Friday, July 23, 2021, you reported that the delivery calls for decreed water (appx. 12 cfs) at the Moore Diversion were satisfied at the head of the ditch, but were not making it to the first user in a beneficially usable amount. Further,
- On the morning of July 24, 2021, you notified the Department that the priority delivery date had changed from 1884 to 1883, and that you would attempt to continue to deliver the senior rights to the Moore Diversion for the remainder of the weekend. The majority of the water called for at the Moore Diversion (appx. 12 cfs noted above) have 1883 priority dates.
- As of this morning, you reported that despite your efforts to deliver the senior water rights to the Moore diversion, there is currently no measureable amount of water reaching the Moore Diversion.

- You stated by email that Advisory Committee Chair, VerNon Roche polled the other committee members on Friday July 23rd regarding their support (or not) of the futile call determination. Shawn Anderson and Jason Anderson were not in support at that time. After you contacted them today, Shawn Anderson agreed to support the determination and Jason Anderson did not.

It is evident that curtailment of junior surface water rights upstream of the Moore Diversion to satisfy senior surface water rights at the Moore Diversion constitutes a futile call. Therefore, you are instructed to distribute surface water flows of the Big Lost River in the reach from Mackay Dam to the Beck Diversion as a separate source for the remainder of the 2021 irrigation season, unless it is subsequently determined that delivery of the senior water rights at the Moore Diversion is no longer futile.

Please feel free to contact me with any related questions or concerns you have.

Regards,



Rob Whitney

Manager, Water Distribution Section

cc: IDWR Eastern Region

Whitney, Rob

From: Hoekema, David
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 12:10 PM
To: Luke, Tim; Whitney, Rob
Subject: Response to Rob's Conversation regarding a Futile Call on the Big Lost River
Attachments: Big Lost River & Reservoir Conditions_20210726.pptx; FutileCallAnalysis.xlsx

Tim and Rob,

Please see the attached analysis showing diversions in the month of July on the Big Lost River. The attachment also shows the calculated inflow into the reservoir throughout July. The reservoir is down to just 1,310 ac-ft of which the PAT indicates (as of Wednesday the 21st) that 118 ac-ft are rotation water held by Mauthe, Nelson, and Pehrson.

Lucas indicated to me that the users on the Moore Canal have stopped calling for storage water. With the canal down to 1,310 ac-ft Lucas is holding the reservoir flat in order to save storage water for users who indicated that they are planning to call for the water in September.

As the reservoir has been flat-lined, so as to only pass inflows (natural flow), it appears that the natural flow in the river is not adequate to carry water to the Moore Diversion. Figure 1 shows reservoir content and Figure 2 shows reservoir outflow. Figure 3 shows how the delivery factor (i.e. the amount of water that is deliverable within the reach = Outflow / Inflow) has dropped significantly as the flow in the river has been reduced to carry only the natural flow. Losses within the reaches are calculated in the attached spreadsheet.

Reservoir storage, acre-feet

Most recent instantaneous value: 1610 07-26-2021 06:15 MDT

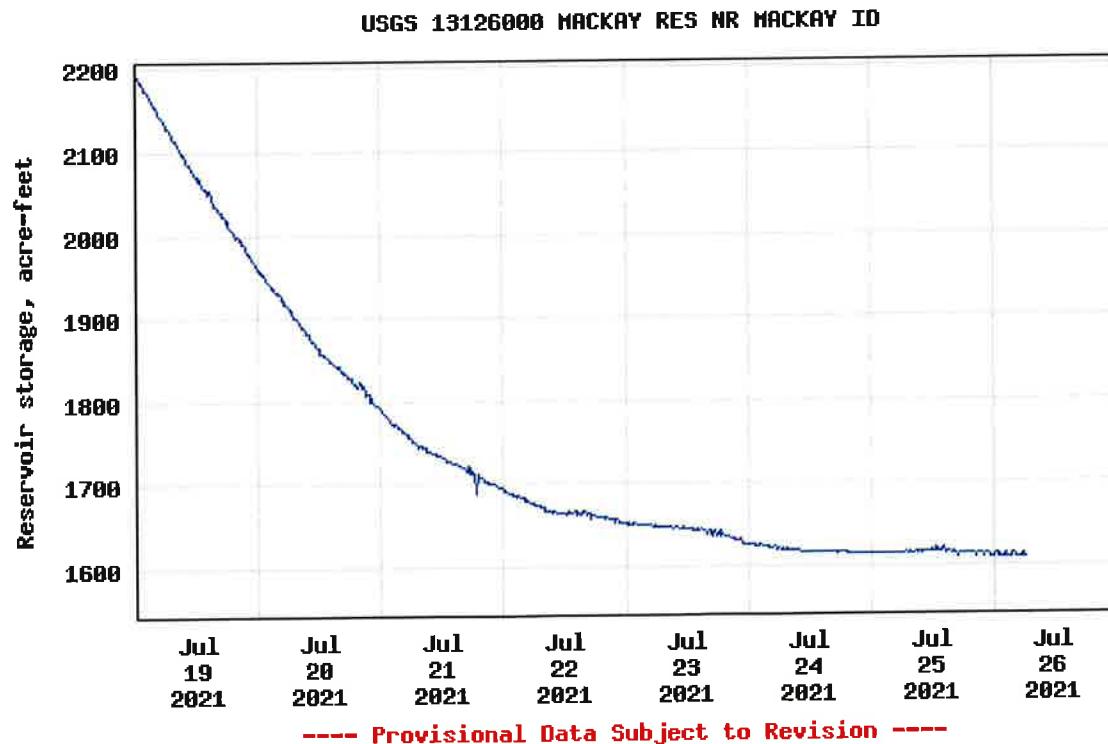


Figure 1 Mackay Reservoir content in the month of July.

Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent instantaneous value: 140 07-26-2021 07:45 MDT

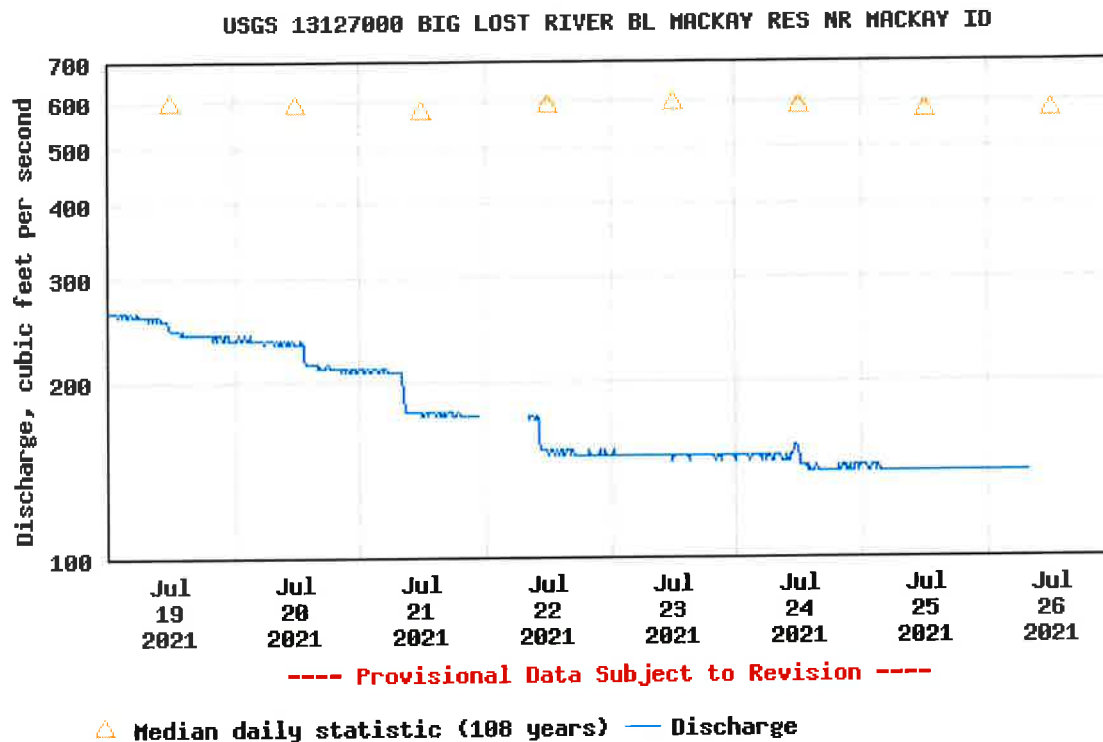


Figure 2 Reservoir outflow as measured at the 2B Gage. With the reservoir flat the natural flow appears to be 140 cfs. This inflow is a close match to the estimated inflow into the reservoir per the attached calculations.

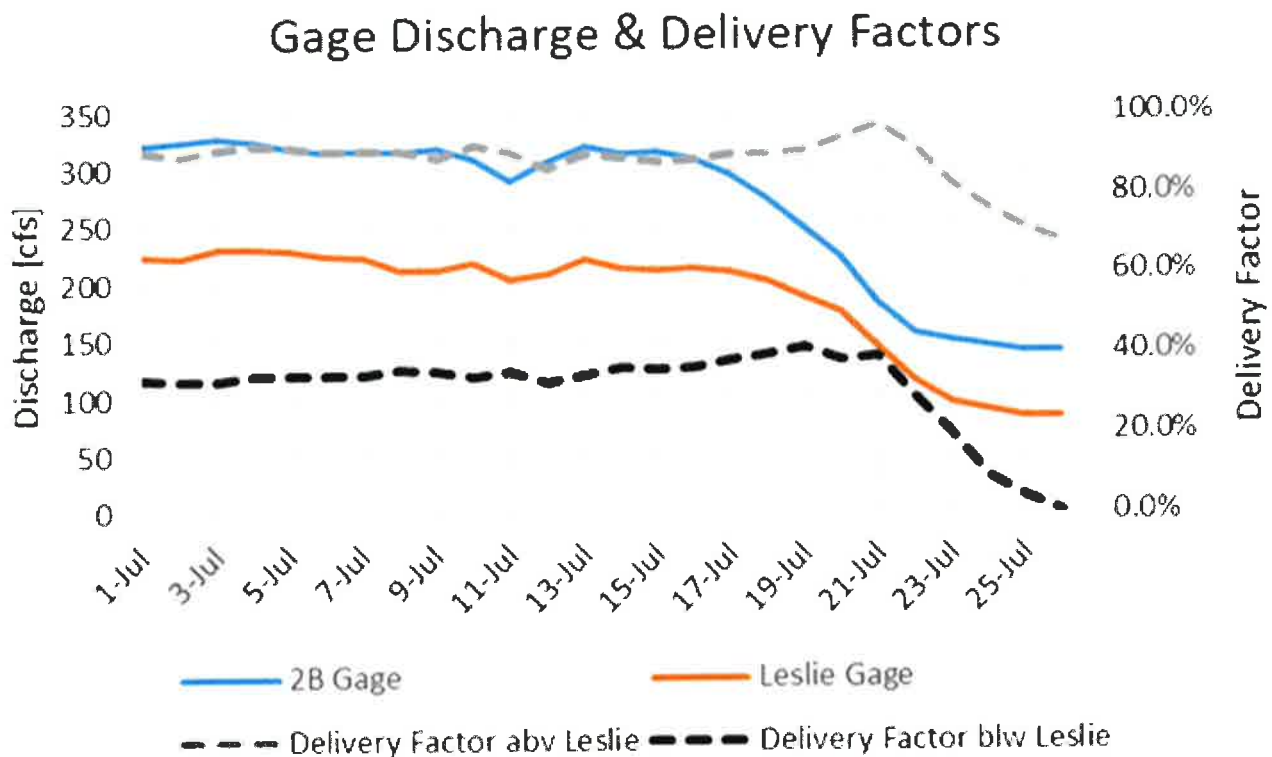


Figure 3 Flow past the 2B Gage is shown by the blue line, flow past the Leslie Gage is shown by the orange line, the delivery factor above the Leslie Gage is shown by the dashed, grey line, and the delivery factor blw Leslie is shown by the dashed, black line.

Whitney, Rob

From: Luke, Tim
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 11:49 AM
To: General Manager
Cc: Whitney, Rob; Hoekema, David
Subject: RE: WD 34 Futile Call Request

Thanks Lucas. The additional clarification is appreciated. Rob is preparing a letter as we speak. He will get some updated info from David too. Should have something later today. Thanks for making a good faith effort to deliver the 1883 priority rights on the Moore – I think it helps to make that showing among a number of users in the basin.

Tim

From: General Manager [mailto:blridgm@atcnet.net]
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 11:44 AM
To: Luke, Tim <Tim.Luke@idwr.idaho.gov>
Cc: Whitney, Rob <Rob.Whitney@idwr.idaho.gov>; Hoekema, David <David.Hoekema@idwr.idaho.gov>
Subject: RE: WD 34 Futile Call Request

FYI on the advisory members polling. The two members referenced were Shawn Anderson and Jason Anderson. I spoke with Shawn just now and he agreed to support the futile call with the numbers today. When I spoke with Jason he was against making the Futile call.

From: General Manager <blridgm@atcnet.net>
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 11:03 AM
To: 'Luke, Tim' <Tim.Luke@idwr.idaho.gov>
Cc: 'Whitney, Rob' <Rob.Whitney@idwr.idaho.gov>; 'Hoekema, David' <David.Hoekema@idwr.idaho.gov>
Subject: RE: WD 34 Futile Call Request

After speaking with Rob on the phone I would like to answer I few questions he had below.

- 1) On Friday 7-23-2021 Vernon Roche, chairman of the advisory board contact all the board members polling their support for a futile call on the river. All the advisory board members except two, which wanted to wait until the numbers justified it, supported the futile call.
- 2) PivoTrac gauges still shows minimal amounts of water at the Sharp, Burnett and Beck heading. These heading were shut of as far as they can go and curtailed for the 1883 decree call.
- 3) The reduction in the river flow from last week to this week was a result on storage water being cut out of the river either from users accounts running out or no demand. The reservoir is only at 3% (1610 aF) which leaves very little to call for.
- 4) My secretary is out with the flu today. DWR central will be updated as soon as possible. It is only updated once a week during the season and it is typical for the numbers to be entered on either a Monday or a Tuesday.

From: Luke, Tim <Tim.Luke@idwr.idaho.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 10:00 AM
To: General Manager <blridgm@atcnet.net>
Cc: Whitney, Rob <Rob.Whitney@idwr.idaho.gov>; Hoekema, David <David.Hoekema@idwr.idaho.gov>
Subject: RE: WD 34 Futile Call Request

Lucas,

I spoke with Rob regarding your request and information. I asked a couple of questions of him – he will follow up with you this morning.

Tim

From: General Manager [<mailto:blridgm@atcnet.net>]
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 8:45 AM
To: Luke, Tim <Tim.Luke@idwr.idaho.gov>
Cc: Whitney, Rob <Rob.Whitney@idwr.idaho.gov>
Subject: WD 34 Futile Call Request

Tim,
I would like to request that IDWR please make a futile call for the delivery of water to the Moore Diversion based upon the lack of beneficial use of the decree water. Currently WD34 is attempting to deliver the 8-10-1883's to the Moore Canal starting on 7-24-2021 and no water is reaching Diversion. There is no storage water being delivered to any canal. This makes the river shrink 100%. If the futile call is determined the last point of delivery of water on the Big Lost River would be moved up to the Beck Canal Heading which would allow beneficial use again. As watermaster I have the general consent of the advisory board and The Big Lost River Irrigation District approves WD34's request. Please review the supporting information below and if you have any questions or need any additional information, please let me know. Thank you

Lucas Yockey
WD34 Watermaster

Daily Data:

7-26-2021

Inflow: 138 cfs
Release: 140 cfs
Sharp: 0 cfs
Swauger: 3.8 cfs (well water)
Burnett: 0 cfs
Darlington: 8.4 (well water)
Beck: 0 cfs
Moore: 0 cfs

7-25-2021

Inflow: 137 cfs
Release: 140 cfs
Sharp: 0 cfs
Swauger: 3.8 cfs (well water)
Burnett: 0 cfs
Darlington: 8.4 (well water)
Beck: 0 cfs
Moore: 2.1 cfs

7-24-2021

Inflow: 134 cfs
Release: 149 cfs
Sharp: 0 cfs
Swauger: 3.8 cfs (well water)

Burnett: 0 cfs
Darlington: 8.4 (well water)
Beck: 0 cfs
Moore: 2.3 cfs